



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

H.A

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/697,461	10/30/2003	Martin A. Cotton	8245.061	7982
30589 7590 02/07/2007 DUNLAP, CODDING & ROGERS P.C. PO BOX 16370 OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73113			EXAMINER NORRIS, JEREMY C	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2841	

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/07/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/697,461	Applicant(s) COTTON, MARTIN A.	
	Examiner Jeremy C. Norris	Art Unit 2841	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 November 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 and 23-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 17-20 and 29 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16, 21, 23-28 and 30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 October 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US 4,628,598 (Taylor).

Taylor discloses, referring primarily to figure 1, a printed circuit board (100) having a wiring connection structure (102) for interconnecting wiring circuit traces (104, 106, 108) on a plurality of circuit trace layers applied on a plurality of printed circuit board layers (110, 112) and electrically isolated there between by the printed circuit board layers and having a printed circuit board multi-layer structure, characterized by: a hollow through hole (102) having a non-circular shaped cross section normal to a longitudinal axis of the hollow through hole (see col. 5, lines 50-68) and having an interior wall that vertically extends through and intersects and exposes at least two wire circuit traces (104, 106) and having a plating of conductive material (103) applied to the interior wall electrically connecting the at least two wire circuit traces (col. 3, lines 35-40) [claim 1].

Claims 2, 9-12, 21, 23-26, and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US 5,677,515 (Selk).

Selk discloses, referring primarily to figures 3a and 3b, a printed circuit board having an EMI shielding structure for shielding wiring circuit traces on a plurality of circuit trace layers applied on a plurality of printed circuit board layers and electrically isolated there between by the printed circuit board layers and having a printed circuit board multi-layer structure, characterized by: a trench (72, 74) having a rim about an opening of the trench at a top printed circuit board layer and said trench extending through a plurality of printed circuit board layers to a grounding plane (50) exposing said grounding plane and said trench having an interior wall with a conductive plating material (70) applied over said interior wall and said trench having a length greater than two times a breadth of said trench and wherein the trench completely surrounds an area and extends adjacent to the perimeter of the printed circuit board (see figure 3b) and wherein said conductive plating material electrically connects to said exposed grounding plane [claim 2].

Additionally, Selk discloses, a printed circuit board having a reference plane structure for fixing a potential reference for a plurality of wiring circuit trace layers that are electrically isolated there between by a plurality of printed circuit board layers and having a printed circuit board layer with a main surface, characterized by: a wire trace circuit layer (44) applied to said main surface; a printed circuit board insulation layer (62) formed over said wire trace circuit layer; a reference plane (50) applied over the

Art Unit: 2841

printed circuit board insulation layer; a trench (72, 74) having an interior wall extending through and exposing the wire trace circuit layer, and the trench further extending through the insulation layer to the reference plane wherein the reference plane is exposed and wherein the trench completely surrounds an area and extends adjacent to the perimeter of the printed circuit board layer (col. 4, lines 50-55); and a conductive plating layer (70) on the interior wall electrically connects the wire trace circuit layer to the reference plane [claim 9], wherein the trench completely encompasses the wire trace circuit layer [claim 10], wherein the reference plane is fixed at a ground potential (see col. 4, lines 55-65) [claim 11], wherein the reference plane is fixed at a reference voltage (see col. 4, lines 55-65) [claim 12].

Also, Selk discloses, referring primarily to figures 3a-4c, a printed circuit board having an EMI shielding structure for shielding a plurality of wire trace layers, characterized by: a printed circuit board layer having a wire trace (44) applied thereto; an insulation layer (66); and a grounding plane (50); a first trench (72, 74) having an interior wall and forming a perimeter completely surrounding the wire trace (col. 4, lines 50-55), the first trench extending adjacent to the perimeter of the printed circuit board layer, extending through the printed circuit board layer and extending to the ground plane and exposing said ground plane; and an electrically conductive plating material (70) applied upon the interior wall of the first trench and electrically connecting to the exposed ground plane providing a perimeter shield for the trace [claim 21], further characterized by: a second trench (72', 74') having an interior wall and spaced a distance from the first trench such that the wire trace extends between the first trench

and second trench, the second trench extending through the printed circuit board said ground plane, layer and extending to the ground plane exposing said ground plane wherein the interior wall of the second trench is plated with an electrically conductive plating material electrically connecting to the exposed ground plane thereby providing a double trench shield (figure 4b, col. 4, lines 60-65) [claim 23], further characterized by: an EMC sensitive track of conductive material (44) extending wholly within a perimeter defined by the first trench and disposed between a plurality of circuit board insulation layers through which the first trench extends [claim 24].

Moreover, Selk discloses, a printed circuit board having an EMI shielding structure for shielding a plurality of wire trace layers, characterized by: a plurality of printed circuit board layers having a plurality of wire trace layers, each printed circuit board layer separated by an insulation layer and having a grounding plane layer; and a first trench (72, 74) completely surrounding an area and extending adjacent to the perimeter and extending from a top printed circuit board layer to the grounding plane layer (50), the first trench having an electrically conductive plating (70) applied over an interior wall of the first trench and electrically connecting to the ground plane [claim 25], further characterized by: a second trench (40B-1) disposed interior to the first trench and said second trench extending substantially in parallel to the first trench; and the second trench having an electrically conductive plating (52) applied over an interior wall thereof electrically connecting to the ground plane and an EMC sensitive track (33B) extending in a printed circuit board layer positioned between the first trench and the second trench [claim 26].

Art Unit: 2841

Furthermore, Selk discloses, a printed circuit board having an EMI shielding structure for shielding a plurality of wire trace layers, characterized by: a plurality of printed circuit board layers having a plurality of wire trace layers, each printed circuit board layer separated by an insulation layer and having a grounding plane layer (50); a first trench (72, 74) extending from a top printed circuit board layer to the grounding plane layer and the first trench having an electrically conductive plating (70) applied over an interior wall of the first trench and electrically connecting to the ground plane; and a second trench disposed interior to the first trench and said second trench extending substantially in parallel to the first trench (figure 4a) and the second trench having an electrically conductive plating applied over an interior wall thereof electrically connecting to the ground plane; and at least two EMC sensitive tracks (42, 44) extending in a printed circuit board layer positioned between the first trench and the second trench [claim 30].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

Art Unit: 2841

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 3-8, 13-16, 27 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 5,191,174 (Chang) in view of US 5,342,999 (Frei).

Regarding claims 3-8 and 28, Chang discloses, referring primarily to figure 3, a printed circuit board having a wiring connection structure for interconnecting at least two wire traces therein, characterized by: a first wire trace applied to a main surface of a printed circuit board layer (41) and having a first terminal landing pad (59) with a hollow first through hole there through, and having an inner wall; a first insulation layer (33) formed over said first wire trace having a hollow second through hole of identical cross sectional geometry to and vertically aligned with the hollow first through hole and the hollow second through hole having an inner wall; and a second wire trace (29) applied to the first insulation layer having a second terminal landing pad with a hollow third through hole having identical geometry to and vertically aligned with the first through hole and the third through hole having an inner wall; and wherein the inner wall of the hollow first through hole, the inner wall of the hollow second through hole, and the inner wall of the hollow third through hole are plated with an electrically conductive material (37) forming a plated hole that vertically intersects the first and second terminal pads and electrically connects the first wire trace and the second wire trace. Chang does not specifically state that the holes have a non-circular cross section [claim 3]. However, it is well known in the art to form hollow through holes in non-circular shapes as

Art Unit: 2841

evidenced by Frei (see col. 6, lines 35-40). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to form the holes in Chang with a non-circular cross section. The motivation for doing so would have been to allow flexibility of wiring layout. Furthermore, it has been held that more than a mere change of form is necessary for patentability. *Span-Deck, Inc v. Fab-con, Inc.* (CA 8, 1982) 215 USPQ 835. Similarly, since any shape is taught by Frei, the non-circular cross section may be irregular [claim 4], "U" shaped [claim 5], "L" shaped [claim 6], cross-shaped [claim 7]. Moreover, the modified invention of Chang teaches, wherein the first through hole has a shaped continuous curved cross section centered on a circumference diameter of a standard single diameter circular profile micro via and is wholly contained within or extends beyond the perimeter defined by the circumference diameter [claim 8], wherein the non-circular shaped cross section of the through hole is a cross, a "U", an "L", an "E", a square, a rectangle, a "double cross" a star, an oval, a continuous curve, or an irregular shape (see Frei col. 6, lines 35-40) [claim 28].

Regarding claims 13-15, Chang discloses, a printed circuit board having a wiring connection structure, characterized by: a first wire trace having a width and applied to a main surface of a printed circuit board layer and having a first terminal landing pad (59) and having a first hollow through hole; a first insulation layer (33) formed over said first wire trace and having a second hollow through hole having an inner wall and having identical geometry and orientation as the first hollow through hole and vertically aligned with the first hollow through hole; and a second wire trace (29) applied to the first insulation layer and having a second terminal landing pad and having a third hollow

Art Unit: 2841

through hole having an inner wall and having identical geometry to the first hollow through hole and aligned with the first hollow through hole, and the inner wall of the first hollow through hole, the inner wall of the second hollow through hole, and the inner wall of the third hollow through hole wherein are plated with an electrically conductive material (37) forming a plated hole which vertically intersects the first terminal pad and second terminal pad and electrically connects the first wire trace and the second wire trace. Chang does not specifically disclose that the first hollow through hole has a non-circular cross section taken normal to a longitudinal axis of the first through hole and having an inner wall and with a major diameter and a minor diameter wherein the minor diameter is less than the width of the first wire trace and the major diameter is elongated and oriented along a longitudinal direction of the first terminal landing pad [claim 13]. However, Frei teaches using an elliptical via for electrical interconnection (col. 6, lines 35-40). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to use the elliptical via taught by Frei as the through hole in the invention of Chang. The motivation for doing so would have been to have the ability to decrease the pitch of the via array. Moreover, the modified invention of Chang teaches, wherein the major diameter is at least about twice that of the minor diameter (see Chang col. 6, lines 10-20) [claim 14], wherein the major diameter is at least about three times that of the minor diameter (see Chang col. 6, lines 10-20) [claim 15].

Likewise, regarding claim 16, Chang discloses, a printed circuit board having a wiring connection structure, characterized by: a first wire trace having a first width and

Art Unit: 2841

applied to a main surface of a printed circuit board layer and having a first terminal landing pad (59) an insulation layer (33) formed over said first wire trace and having a second hollow through hole having an inner wall and having identical geometry and orientation as the first hollow through hole and vertically aligned with the first hollow through hole; and a second wire trace (29) applied to the insulation layer and having a second terminal landing pad and having a third hollow through hole having identical geometry to the first hollow through hole and aligned with the first hollow through hole, and wherein the inner wall of the first through hole, the inner wall of the second hollow through hole, and the inner wall of the third hollow through hole are plated with an electrically conductive material (37) forming a plated hole which vertically intersects the first terminal pad and second terminal pad and electrically connects the first wire trace and the second wire trace. Chang does not specifically disclose that the landing pad has a second width which is greater than the first width and having a first through hole having a non-circular cross section taken normal to a longitudinal axis of the first through hole and having an inner wall and with a major diameter and a minor diameter and wherein the minor diameter is less than the second width and wherein the major diameter is greater than the first width and is oriented along a longitudinal direction within the first terminal landing pad [claim 16]. However, Frei teaches using an elliptical via for electrical interconnection. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to use the elliptical via taught by Frei as the through hole in the invention of Chang. The motivation for doing so would have been to have the ability to decrease the pitch of the via array.

Regarding claim 27, the modified invention of Chang teaches the claimed invention as described above with respect to claim 3, including a second plated through hole (55) except the modified invention of Chang does not specifically state that the second plated through hole having a non-circular cross section which is different from the non-circular cross section of the first plated through hole [claim 27]. However, Frei teaches that the openings may have any shape (see col. 6, lines 30-40). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to make the cross-sections different shapes. The motivation for doing so would have been to differentiate the two holes via a visual inspection.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 20 November 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 1 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Regarding claims 2, 9-12, 21, 23-26, and 30, Applicant alleges, "Selk teaches a printed circuit board characterised (sic) by a groove which extends through a plurality of printed circuit board layers to a grounding plane. Selk explicitly describes the groove to be 'located at the middle of the printed wiring board 40' (col. 4, lines 48-49). Therefore, Selk does not teach the printed circuit board recited in Applicant's amended claims 2, 9, 21, 25 and 30, which is characterised by a trench that ""completely surrounds an area and extends adjacent to the perimeter of the printed circuit board . . ."" Therefore, Selk

Art Unit: 2841

does not teach or describe Applicant's printed circuit board of claims 2, 9, 21, 25, and 30". However, this allegation stems from a mischaracterization of the invention of Selk. The relevant passage of Selk, with full context states: "Groove 72 is routed through the outer layers and extends up to or partially through the conductive base layer 50 located at the middle of the printed wiring board 40" (col. 4, lines 45-50). It would be readily apparent to the ordinarily skilled artisan that it is the "conductive base layer 50" that is "located at the middles of the printed wiring board" and not "groove 72". This structure is additionally illustrated by figures 3a and 3b of Selk. Furthermore, Applicant has not provided any additional arguments specifically for claims 11, 12, 23, 24, and 26.

Regarding claims 3-8, 13-16, 27, and 28, Applicant alleges, "Frei leads away from the teaching of Chang. Chang describes a circuit board that stresses the importance of the diameters and the alignments of the through-holes (col. 5, line 53 - col. 6, line 50). Frei, on the other hand, teaches through-holes that are substantially aligned (col. 6, lines 67-68). In addition, Frei explicitly teaches that the precise diameter of the holes through the layers is "relatively unimportant" (col. 6 lines 28-29). Therefore, Frei teaches away from Chang's claimed invention. Thus, it is Applicant's belief that a prima facie case of obviousness has not been provided. In light of the foregoing, it is Applicant's belief that claims 3, 13, and 16 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the teachings of Chang in view of Frei." However, nothing in the cited passage would lead the ordinarily skilled artisan to believe that Chang "stresses the importance of the diameters and the alignments of the through-holes". Conversely, Chang explicitly states "Further, the through-holes as shown in the final composite structure of FIG. 5 may be

Art Unit: 2841

of different size (diameters) depending on the interconnections desired". Thus, it is clear that Chang is not critically concerned with the physical dimensions of the through holes in a similar fashion as Frei. Hence, the two inventions comprise analogous art and one of ordinary skilled would be motivated to combine their teachings as stated above in the instant rejection.

Having addressed each of Applicant's arguments, the traversal of the instant rejections, on these grounds is deemed unsuccessful.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeremy C. Norris whose telephone number is 571-272-1932. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 9:30 am - 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dean Reichard can be reached on 571-272-1984. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 2841

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Jeremy C. Norris
Patent Examiner - Technology
Center 2800
Art Unit 2841

JCSN